

T H E  
Glorious R E W A R D  
O F  
**Faithful Ministers**

Declared and Improved.

I N A  
**S E R M O N**  
U P O N

The Occasion of the Funeral of that Excellent  
Minister of Jesus Christ

*HENRY NEWCOME, A.M.*

Late Pastor of a Congregation at *Manchester*  
in *Lancashire*.

By *JOHN CHORLTON*.

L O N D O N :

Printed for *T. P.* and are to be Sold by *Zachary Whitworth*  
Bookfeller in *Manchester*, 1696.



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To the Worthy and much Honoured Lady

The Lady MERIEL MOSSLEY.

Madam,

**Y**OUR long and intimate Acquaintance with Reverend Mr. Newcome of Blessed Memory, the Relation in which he stood to you, and the High Esteem which he always found with you, together with your many Generous Expressions of Kindness to his Person and Family, give you an undoubted Title to this Memorial of him. I am very sensible that what I have here done, or am able at any time to do, can neither be Worthy of his Name and Memory, nor merit your Ladships Acceptance. But, your Candour, Madam, is equal to your Great Judgment; and therefore I despair not of your Pardon where I am liable to Censure, nor can I doubt your Favourable Reception and Patronage to what is any way capable of Approbation. I know your Prudence and Humility would dispose you to an extream Resentment, should I dilate upon those many Virtuous and Honourable Endowments, which ren-

## The Epistle Dedicatory.

der you a most Conspicuous Ornament of your Sex and Quality. Therefore, instead of displaying your Ladiships Exemplary Goodness, which is already so Universally acknowledged, I shall pray that it may have a most diffusive and powerful Influence upon others; may it convince them how vain the Attempt is of arriving at true Greatness, unless they first become truly Pious and Religious. And may it please the God of all Grace, to Sanctifie all his Dispensations to you, and to enrich you more and more with all Wisdom, Grace and Felicity, that after a constant Perseverance in his Blessed Fear, you may be joyfully translated to his Everlasting Kingdom and Glory. So Prays

Your Ladiships

Most-Obliged Humble Servant in the Gospel

*John Chortren.*



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TO THE  
CHRISTIAN READER,

Especially such as lived under Excellent Mr.  
*Newcome's* most Fruitful Ministry.

**T***WO things* come under present Consideration. *The following Discourse*, and the *Occasion* of it. There is nothing to make the *former* unacceptable, but the *latter*. You have, here, a most Sublime Portion of Scripture very aptly explained, and usefully applied, so as to Minister Light, and Warmth, to them that read. *That only* in the whole, which is Grievous, is, That we are told Worthy Mr. *Newcome* is Dead! *This* is a gloomy Theme! and is only capable of a more Lightsome, Pleasant Aspect from the Brightness of the Firmament, and the Lustre of the Stars, into which so Wise and Powerful Preachers of the Glorious Gospel are at length transformed, as this Discourse excellently shews. In the mean time, this is a Loss which few can estimate, though they that suffer it are very many. It may be truly  
said:

## The Preface.

said of *such a Man, as unknown and yet well known.* They that knew him best, could know but a small part of his true and great Worth, and might always apprehend when they knew most of him, there was still much more that they knew not. His most *sincere* and *inartificial Humility*, still drawing a Vail over his other Excellencies ; Which it *hid*, and *adorned*, at once. So as the Appetite of knowing more , must always meet with a *Check* and an *Incitation* at the same time. There was in him a large Stock of *Solid Learning and Knowledge*, always ready for use ; for *Ostentation*, never. *Conscience* the most strict, and steady to it self, and the remotest from *Censoriousness* of other Men. *Eloquence* without *any Labour of his own*, not imitable by the *greatest Labour of another*. O the strange way he had of *Insinuating* and *Winding* himself into his Hearers Bosoms ! I have sometimes heard him, when the only thing to be regretted was, that the Sermon must so soon be at an end. *Conversation*, so *Facetious* and *Instructive* together , that they who enjoy'd it, if they were capable of improving it, could scarce tell whether they went away from him more *edified*, or *delighted*. He was a *burning and a shining Light*. O Manchester !

## The Preface.

*ster ! Manchester ! that ancient, famed, Seat of Religion and Profession, May Capernaum's Doom never be thine ! May thy Heyrick, Hollingworth, Newcome, and thy Neighbours Angier, Harrison, and divers more, never be Witnesses against thee ! They are Dead ! And all Flesh is Grass, but the Word of the Lord endureth for ever, Even that Word of the Gospel which hath by them been preached to you. It never dies. And may it still abide with you, and in you. O labour to hold forth the Word of Life, that such as have labour'd among you, may rejoyce in the day of Christ, that they have not run in vain, nor labour'd in vain. Let it appear you are the Epistles of Christ, ministred by them, to be known and read of all Men ; So what there appear'd of Christ in them, will, as in another Edition, be seen in you. And thus will the Memory of this your Last deceased Pastor, be best preserved among you, when you shall every one discern Mr. Newcome still, in each others Savoury Speech, pleasant and composed Looks, becoming Behaviour, and regular well-ordered Conversation. This will make the Love of him live still in your Hearts, which will no doubt appear and be exercised towards any of his, you have yet surviving  
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## *The Preface.*

among you, to whom you may shew kindness for his sake. Thus you may let the World know your Love to him did not die with him, nor was buried in his Grave. You will by *real Proofs* testify your value of him, whose Circumstances, at last, gave *real Proof*, that he sought not yours, but you. I pray God a double Portion of *Elijah's* Spirit may rest upon your remaining *Elisba*. And am,

Yours in our Common Lord

J. HOWE.



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The Glorious Reward of Faithful Ministers declared and improved. In a Sermon, &c.

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Daniel 12. 3.

*And they that be wise shall shine as the Brightness of the Firmament, and they that turn many to Righteousness, as the Stars for ever and ever.*

**T**HIS is a Consolatory Passage annexed to a Dismal Propheſie, wherein the Divine Meſſenger relates under ſeveral Myſterious Figures, the many Strange and Various Revolutions that ſhould Influence the Affairs of the Church in future Ages. After which he proceeds to diſcloſe the final Reſult of all thoſe mighty Changes; And thereby to obviate the Diſcouragements which would ariſe from the Foreknowledge of them. And firſt there is a Conſolation propounded generally to all that are Holy and Good. Such ſhall awake at the Reſurrection to everlaſting Life, when all Ungodly Men (but more eſpecially all Perſecutors, and thoſe who through their Brutal Violence, or baſe Flatteries, became Apoſtates from the true Religion) ſhall be covered with Shame and everlaſting Contempt. But as Miniſters have

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## The Glorious Reward of

commonly the largest Share in the Calamities which befall the Church; so they have for their better Support and Encouragement, an Eminency and Preference assigned them in that Glory, the very least and lowest Degree of which, far transcends the Value of all their Labours and Sufferings.

There are different Degrees of Glory to be conferred upon Persons in the other World, in a just Proportion to the different Measures of Personal Holiness and Publick Usefulness, whereby they have signalized and distinguished themselves in this.

By *those that are Wise*, some understand Religious Persons, who are subject to the Instruction and Conduct of their Teachers. But I shall wave this Sense, and consider *the Wise* in the former Clause, as importing the same with *those that turn many to Righteousness* in the latter.

The word here translated *Wise*, is also rendred Teachers, and Chap. 11. v. 33. both Phrases are put together as Equivalents, or at least filling up the same Character; *They that understand among the People shall instruct many.*

Those that make a difference between *the Wise*, and *they that turn many to Righteousness*, are likewise obliged to distinguish between the Brightness of the Firmament, and that of the Stars; whereas it is (more probably) one and the same Metaphorical Resemblance under a grateful Variety of Expression. So that the Phrase appears to be doubled, that it might be more Emphatical, and the better amplify and set forth the matter intended.

*The Wise*, then, are the Ministers of the Church, considered as the prime Vessels in which (under the Mediator) the Treasures of Divine Wisdom are repositied; that by them a Supply thereof may be regularly and statedly conveyed to the several parts of God's Holy Church. *Those that turn many to Righteousness*, are still the same Persons considered as Faithfully and Successfully employing the Gifts and Graces they have received, *To turn the Disobedient to the Wisdom of the Just.* 'Tis not Mens being qualified with Gifts, nor their being obliged by their Office and Profession, to

### *Faithful Ministers declared and improved.* 3

turn many to Righteousness, that will entitle them to any Reward at all, much less to one that is so Superlatively Excellent. There must be, at least, when those are supposed, a Sincere Desire, manifesting it self in fervent and importunate Endeavours, to open the Eyes of Sinners, and to turn them from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God. For, should we suppose a Person devoted to the Sacred Office, not only to pretend to it, but to be really, under God, the Instrument that effects this great Work of Conversion, it would avail him nothing, if at last it appears that this Change was never wrought upon himself. Where the Success is owing only to a Form and Appearance of Sanctity, which the Minister assumed and managed with much Artifice; the very Persons that such an Hypocrite hath turned to Righteousness, will bear a Substantial and Irrefragable Testimony against him. And on the other hand, He that sincerely performs his part, shall not lose his Reward, whatever the Success be.

*Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall he be glorious in the Eyes of the Lord, and his God shall be his strength,* Isa. 49. 5. The Promise in the Text, in the letter of it, doth most expressly belong to those whose Labours are succeeded with answerable Fruit; but the Intent of it undoubtedly extends to all Faithful Ministers. The Matter is thus ordered, that we may have a more natural and ardent Breathing towards the Success of our Labours, and that our Pursuits after this great End may be more Vigorous. If we understand by *The Wise Holy Faithful Teachers in general, and by those that turn many to Righteousness*, the most eminently Laborious and Successful among them; all that are qualified for this Reward, will be included in the Letter of the Promise, and this shadow of an Objection clean removed. Their *Shining as the Brightness of the Firmament, and as the Stars, &c.* implies, That as the Luminaries in the Firmament are the greatest Ornament in the visible Heavens, so are Faithful Ministers of the Intellectual World; where they shall shine with incomparable Brightness in the Mansions of Glory, amongst the Societies of Glorified Saints. The Celestial

Splendour to which they shall be advanced, will exceed all earthly Glory, as much as the pure Azure Sky doth this dull and dirty Clod of Earth. The Glory of the Stars may be alluded unto in this place rather than that of the Sun (to which this Reward is elsewhere compared) upon several Accounts. *Christ Jesus, the Son of Righteousness, will ever be the chiefest Glory of the Church*, both whilst Militant and when Triumphant. The brightest Constellation of Ministers shines but with a diminutive as well as derived Lustre in comparison of him. Besides which, it more aptly refers us to Multitudes of these Holy Instructors; and may intimate to us, that even amongst these, *One Star differeth from another Star in Glory*. This shining is said to be *for ever and ever*. They shall not only shine in Fame and Renown through a long course of time upon Earth, but in the Perfection of Light and Glory in the Heaven of Heavens for ever more.

The words are an entire Proposition of themselves, importing thus much, *That all Wise and Faithful Ministers, that turn many to Righteousness, shall possess an eminent degree of Heavenly Glory for evermore*.

In the Prosecution of which, I shall do these three things :

1. Describe the Subjects to whom these high degrees of Glory are promised.

2. Demonstrate the Certainty of this Truth, and unfold the Reasons why Ministers shall be so plentifully rewarded.

3. I shall attempt a Manifestation of that excellent Glory, in part, and so far as will suit with our present Design; and then apply the whole.

1. The Subjects to whom these high Degrees of Glory are promised, are Wise and Faithful Ministers, that approve themselves to be such, by turning many to Righteousness. They themselves first turn to Righteousness, and are thereby prepared and disposed to employ all their Abilities and Opportunities to convert others. Such are not satisfied with  
 Upbraiding



*Faithful Ministers declared and improved.* . 5

Upbraiding and Daunting wicked Men, or Shaming and Restraining them from their manifest Impieties. It does not suffice them to reclaim Notorious Offenders, only so far as to reduce them to a more Moral and Decent Behaviour. It is natural to Faithful Ministers to endeavour the Propagation of the same Vital Principle of Holy Living, and *the same Union with the Lord Jesus, the Head and Fountain of it*, which themselves believe and Experience. Faithful Ministers *covet* most earnestly *to change* the very Tempers and Dispositions of Men, from their natural Probity, to an Holy Aptitude and Sufficiency for Gracious and Heavenly Operations. They rejoyce in every Advance that is made towards the Divine Life; but that Divine Life it self (in Sincerity at first, and afterwards in the Progress and final Consummation of it) is what they press after themselves, and above all things, with the most assiduous Application, endeavour to promote in their Hearers and People.

Their business is to illuminate the Minds of Men, to convince their Consciences, to rectifie their Judgments, and perswade their Wills, to a sound and deep Repentance for their past Miscarriages, to a present Reformation of what is amiss in their Hearts and Lives, and to a fixed Resolution of walking with God and their Fellow-Creatures (especially those of the same Holy Christian Profession) in all Purity. 'Tis to make Men impartially and universally Good: Pious towards God, Just and Charitable towards their Neighbours, Sober, Chast and Humble in their whole Deportment. 'Tis to render them Useful and Exemplary in their particular Stations; and by all this to make Men Blessings to themselves, the Church, and the World; that having Served and Honoured the God that made and redeemed them, in this their Pilgrimage, they may arrive in his due time at *the fullness of Joy, which is in the Presence of God, and the Pleasures for evermore which are at his right hand*. Nor is it their Business, only to inform Persons of the Necessity of a Personal Inherent Righteousness, but also *to acquaint them with the Person, the Offices and Righteousness of the Mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ, God blessed for ever: On*  
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the account whereof, and for whose sake all their Sins are pardoned, and their Sincere, though Imperfect Performances shall be accepted, their Persons justified, and their Souls and Bodies eternally Saved. The means whereby they carry on this great Work, are principally Holy and Powerful Preaching of God's Blessed Word, and the Exemplary Innocency and Purity of their Lives, together with their Patient and Constant Suffering of Reproach and Persecution, when called to it, for the Vindication of those Truths which they preach, profess and practise. If by these and all other instituted means, they prove instrumental (through the Co-operation, and principal Efficiency of the Holy Ghost) to turn one Soul to Righteousness, it is matter of greater Joy to them, than all other Acquests could be. But there is not a Faithful Minister in the Church of God, that desires not, above all things, to gain many and many Souls to Christ, whatever the Foolish World think of it, or may make it cost them for so doing. Every such Minister would be glad to have that fulfilled in himself, which is prophesied of *John Baptist*, *Luke 1. 16. And many of the Children of Israel shall be turn to the Lord their God.* Converting Sinners being the first and great Work of a Minister, is here put for all that is subsequent upon it. *They* are also careful to preserve and perfect the Work of Grace in the Souls that are turned to Righteousness by them.

2. The next Particular I am to account for, is to clear the Certainty of this Truth, and to unfold the Reasons of God's proceeding in this manner with his Faithful Ministers. The Certainty of it is evident both from this and other places of Scripture: *They shall shine, &c.* They are qualified for, and have a Right to an Extraordinary Reward in Heaven, a more bright and massy Crown of Glory than others must expect. This is and ever hath been the Privilege of Ministers, under all God's Dispensations to the Church, by virtue of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Grace. And as all such Rights are now already ratified above, so by the Constitution of that glorious Kingdom, all that die possess of them, shall be solemnly invested with, and admitted to  
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## *Faithful Ministers declared and improved.* 7

their proper and peculiar Rewards immediately upon their Dissolution. The Holy Angels themselves will assist at their Inthronization, and the whole Heavenly Host will cheerfully joyn their Applauses to it. To this Consideration we may in part ascribe it, that Heaven it self is stiled *Abraham's Bosom*, Luke 16. 22. And that the sitting down with *Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the Kingdom of Heaven*, Matt. 8. 11. is an Expression setting forth the Felicity of that State; as if it were the presence of such prime Ministers that made, and must therefore denominate and describe the Glory of it. Hence it is that *Twelve Thrones* are promised to the Twelve Apostles, Matt. 19. 28. and their names inscribed on the *Twelve Foundations* of the New *Jerusalem*, Rev. 21. 14. And as this proves the Apostles dignified above others, not only Christians but Ministers, so it genuinely infers, that those who succeed them in the Office of the Gospel-Ministry, and in the Fidelity and Diligence wherewith they discharged that Holy Function, shall be joyned with them in the Participation of an extraordinary Bliss. But most clearly is this distinction laid down in that Promise of our Saviour, *He that receiveth a Prophet, &c.* Matt. 10. 41. where the Rewards of a Prophet, and of a Righteous Man, are as clearly distinguished as their Persons and Stations. And as it would be too bold a Restriction to confine either of them to this mortal State, so there can be no doubt but the difference lies in the Excellency of that which is first mentioned above the other.

Thus it appears that Faithful Ministers shall enjoy an *eminent Reward* in Glory from the Tenour of Holy Writ. But because all the Works of God carry the Signatures and Impressions of his infinite Rectitude upon them, and are Harmonious, and conform both to *his* Perfections and to each other: I shall further endeavour to shew the Wisdom and Justice of the Divine Proceedings in this case. And first we may note in the general, that nothing is more becoming the Wisdom and Justice of Almighty God, than to dispense Rewards agreeably to the Meetness and Capacity of the Receivers. Now the turning of many to Righteousness, is a  
Work

Work of such *Heroical Virtue*, that it is highly rewardable in it self, and more pleasing to him to whom the Dispensation of the future Glory belongs, than any other Service whatsoever. Therefore though there be no Merit of Equivalence in the Work, that might claim a Reward in the way of commutative Justice, yet it is greatly expedient to the Ends of Divine Government, that such a Reward should be propounded and promised to, and expected by Faithful Ministers; and if so, it must certainly be just that it should be conferred on them. That the Service we are speaking of, is so highly rewardable, will appear from this Consideration. Besides its being an Act of Obedience to God, and the Mediator (which it partakes in common with all other Acts of *Evangelical Obedience* and Duty, to make it *rewardable*) it obtains a vast Preheminence of all others, in regard of its Intrinsic Excellency, its grand and universal Importance, and the amazing and almost insuperable Difficulties that attend it; than which, there can scarce be more proper Qualities thought of, to recommend any Service, or to render a Person the meetest and most capable Subject of a *Glorious Retribution*.

*Reason 1.* That this is a Work of great Excellency and Worth in it self, appears from many Considerations. First, The Endowments and Qualifications which it supposes and requires. What Knowledge of the Mysteries of Religion, what Acquaintance with the Deceits of Mens Hearts, and the Wiles of the Devil, what a firm Belief of Divine Revelation are indispensably required, to constitute a full Capacity for the Work and Office of a Gospel-Minister?

What Love to God, and seeking of his Glory, what a Thirsting after the Salvation of Mens Souls, what Faith in God, and the Promises for Assistance and Protection are necessary to a serious and deliberate Undertaking of this great Work?

What Zeal and Courage to surmount all Opposition; what Prudence to manage abstruse and difficult Cases; what Patience and Meekness to bear with Affronts, Calumnies and open Injuries from Adversaries; what Candour to decline Mistakes,

## *Faithful Ministers declared and improved.* 9

Mistakes, and prevent Misunderstandings, and a great many little Surmises and Jealousies amongst their Friends and Favourers; what Vigilancy to nip Mischiefs in the Bud; what Moderation and Self-denial in bearing with the Infirmities of the Best; what Tenderneſs and Fidelity to treat thoſe that offend, ſo as to recover them to Repentance; are viſibly neceſſary to carry on the Miniſtry?

What unwearied Diligence and Conſtancy in publick and private Exerciſes, Preaching, Praying, viſiting the Sick, reſolving Offenders, reſolving Doubts, &c. muſt he exerciſe, that would be a Miniſter to purpoſe? and what reſolute Contempt of the World, and all that favours of it, muſt he manifeſt that would turn many to Righteouſneſs?

Besides all that exemplary Holineſs which is neceſſary for all Chriſtians, and will be moſt carefully attended to, and ſtrictly exacted from thoſe that pretend to this great Office. Secondly,

The Excellency of the *Work* is manifeſt from the ſubject matter about which it is converſant: The precious immortal Souls of Men; their Underſtandings, their Hearts, their Conſciences, their Lives, are under its Inſpection and Government.

To Miniſters it belongs to proclaim the glad Tidings of the Goſpel; to expound the Oracles of God; to ſpeak to Men in the Name of the Lord by Authority received from him, about matters of everlaſting Concernment; to preſent the Confeſſions, Supplications and Thankſgivings of the People unto God; to apply the Seals of the New Covenant, to admit Perſons into the Communion of the Church, and upon juſt occaſion to exclude them from it by righteous Cenſures; and again to abſolve them and receive them to Favour upon their Repentance. Thirdly,

The Excellency of the Miniſterial Work will be further illuſtrated and evinced from the relation they ſtand in to God, as the principal Agent that employs and gives them Succeſs; under him they Miniſter for the Demonſtration of his glorious Power and tremendous Juſtice, the Diſplays of his unſearchable Wiſdom and inviolable Truth, the Communications of his ineffable Goodneſs and Love to moſt Unworthy

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Sinners,

Sinners, and for the Impressions of his Divine Purity. Thus Ministers are *Workers together with God*, 2 Cor. 6. 1.

They officiate in that grand Design of Saving Elect Souls, which God from all Eternity framed, and will accomplish through all the Periods of time. In Subordination to God as Creator, they endeavour to bring Souls back from their original Apostasie, to the Fountain of their Beings, and of all Felicity. In Subordination to God as Redeemer, they publish the Heavenly Mission and Doctrine of the Lord Jesus, together with the Evidences that confirm both; they promulgate his Laws, and declare the Terms of Salvation unto Men, and so help to apply his Sufferings, together with all the Vertues of his glorious Resurrection, Ascension, Intercession and Dominion at God's right Hand. Whilst they address the Faculties of Mens Souls by outward Ministrations, the Holy Spirit inwardly and more immediately and effectually touches and moves them with a secret vital Energy, impregnates them with Godlike Dispositions, and replenishes them with a victorious Strength and Activity for God and Glory.

Which infers a *fourth Consideration* enhancing the value of the Ministry; The Consideration (I mean) of the Sublime Excellency of the Work which their Endeavours tend to, and terminate in. And what is that? But the Pardon of Mens Sins, and a mutual Reconciliation between God and Sinners, together with the restoring of God's Image upon Man, and the Glory of Man's Allegiance unto God. Than which no Success can be more Blessed, no Service more Rewardable. Which leads us to the second General Consideration.

*Reason 2.* Turning Souls to Righteousness is therefore highly Rewardable, because it is a Work of grand Importance, and of universal Consequence. So St. James speaks of it, Chap. 5. 19, 20. *Brethren, if any of you do err from the Truth, and one convert him, Let him know that he which converteth the Sinner from the Error of his way, shall save a Soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of Sins.* How nearly is the Glory of God interested in the Success of the Ministry, and how much doth the Eternal Happiness or Misery of Immortal Souls depend upon it? 'Tis this whereby God ordinarily enlarges his Son's Kingdom, and

## *Faithful Ministers declared and improved.* 11

and drives Satan out of his Usurp'd Dominions. If we consider the Church, either as Militant on Earth, or Triumphant in Glory, we shall find that 'tis the Success of the Ministry in turning Souls to Righteousness, that daily adds new Members to both these Illustrious Societies. Whether we only respect the Family, or particular place and Vicinity whereto we belong; or the Congregation of professed Christians into which we are incorporated; or whether we enlarge our Thoughts to the State of the Nation or Kingdom where God hath cast our Lot; or even to that of the World and of Mankind in general; it will soon appear how necessary and important the Work is, on which all these so far depend, as to become every day liker to Heaven or Hell, as it either prevails and prospers, or is obstructed and frustrated.

*Reason 3.* As it is a Work of great Excellency and Importance, so it is extremely difficult. How hard is it to persuade Men to change their Judgments, Affections, Resolutions, or Practice in any matter whatsoever, about which they have been long fixed and determined? But to turn Men from one State, Temper, and Carriage, to another directly contrary, and that not in one instance or two, but in the main bent of their Souls, and the Tenour of their Lives, *must certainly be one of the hardest Tasks in the World.*

He that turns many to Righteousness, must persuade them to despise, abhor and reject those sinful Vanities and Pleasures which heretofore they esteemed, loved, pursued, embraced and even adored above all things; so difficult this Work is. And yet it must be accomplished principally by the Representations of Spiritual and Invisible Objects; by proposing distant and future Rewards; instead of present palpable Entertainments, which have already made very violent and prevailing Impressions upon the Mind, and strangely corrupted and depraved the Imagination, Senses, Appetites and Passions that have been all along caressed by them.

This leads us to consider the manifold Opposition that is constantly made to this great Work; every part of which is sufficiently formidable; but the Combination of all Adversaries together is most wonderful and terrible. There is not a Sinner



converted, but Satan, the World and the Flesh, are conquered and baffled in their most furious Efforts ; and all their Politick Machinations defeated. How many Devilish Suggestions must be rejected ? How many Solicitations from wicked Companions repulsed ? How many evil Habits, that are founded in the very Constitutions of Persons, must be extirpated ? How many plausible Temptations, that are interwoven with Mens Callings and Civil Circumstances in the World, must be vanquished and trampled under foot ? Every Soul that is converted is like a Brand pluckt out of the Fire. But if we consider the Imbecility of the best and ablest Instruments, the Difficulty is yet greater.

We have this Treasure in earthen Vessels ; and that ever so frail a Composition should dash in pieces the Strong-holds of Satan, doth greatly increate the Wonder. Both the Gifts and Graces of the most eminent Ministers are far from being perfect ; their bodily Strength is limited within narrow bounds, and they often meet with Distractions and Avocations which unavoidably interrupt their greatest Assiduity. Nay, so obstinate is the Difficulty of turning one single Soul to Righteousness, that upon a just Computation it will be found vastly to exceed all Humane Power ; so that the Attempt were vain and hopeless, and fit only to be buried in despairing Thoughts, were it not for the promised Concurrences of a Divine Power, infinitely superiour to all Difficulties whatsoever.

But as this Divine Power is not less to be magnified, because it attains its end by the Ministry, so the Difficulties which Ministers conflict with, are not therefore to be made light of, because this Divine Power interposeth it self. Since he that worketh by the Ministry as his Ordinance, works by the utmost Industry of Ministers, as that Creature-agency, by means whereof he will make the Ordinance effectual.

Thus it appears, that turning Souls to Righteousness, is a Work highly rewardable, through the alone Merit and Intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ. *Paul* (though a *chosen Vessel*, and one that had as much to plead in his own behalf as any Man, Yet) *counted all things but dung, that he might win Christ. And he found in him, not having his own Righteousness, which was*

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## *Faithful Ministers declared and improved.* 13

of the Law, but that which is through the Faith of Christ, the Righteousness which is of God by Faith, Phil. 3. 8, 9. Ministers must not be exalted in way of Derogation to the Merit and Glory of the Redeemer; for whatsoever Gifts, Graces, Authority, Success or Honour can be justly attributed to them, are primarily his, and their Glory is his Glory. I shall only add this further Remark, to clear the Wisdom and Justice of God in this case, That an extraordinary Degree of Heavenly Glory, bears but a just Correspondence to the Trust that is reposed in the Ministers of Christ, and to the Honour that is put upon them in this World: They are styled 2 Cor. 5. 20. 1 Cor. 4. 1. *The Ambassadors of Christ, Stewards of the Mysteries of God, &c.* And it is but equal that those should be highly rewarded for discharging this Trust faithfully, who must have suffered, (not only the Vengeance of Eternal Fire, but) greater degrees of Shame and Torment than others, if they had perfidiously betray'd it.

Having shewed what it is to turn Sinners to Righteousness, and how reasonable it is, that so excellent, so necessary, so difficult a Work, should be crowned with an extraordinary Recompence; I shall next proceed to open the nature of that Recompence, as it is here compared to the *brightrness of the Firmament, and the shining of the Stars for ever and ever.* But, if Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the hearts of Man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him; If the lowest degree of Glory, do so far exceed the Comprehension of the most raised and refined Intellects here below, How shall we hope to describe the heights of that excelling Glory, which shall be the Portion of those that turn many to Righteousness?

All therefore that I shall attempt, is to declare so much of it, as is fairly deducible from this rich Similitude.

Concerning which, I observe, first in the general, that there is a two-fold Congruity in this Comparison, between the Work of Ministers, and their Reward.

First, As the Reward of Faithful Ministers is compared to Light; and Secondly, as it is compared to the Light which is Celestial.

First,

## The Glorious Reward of

First, The Comparison of *Light* in general is apt, because it refers clearly to their Office and Work. What more suitable than that those who shined in Wisdom and Holiness, *who bare witness to Jesus Christ the true light, which lighteth every Man that cometh into the World*, John 1. 9. In whose hearts God hath shined, *who commanded the light to shine out of Darkness, to give the light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ*, 2 Cor. 4. 6. That these, I say, should be crowned with Rays of everlasting Light.

Nor is it less observable, in the next place, that it is an Heavenly Shining, that is made use of to represent the Rewards of Faithful Ministers. They are the Heavenly Regions that most abound with Light, and in which all the great Springs and Fountains of Light are situate. Well then may our Minds be abstracted from this Earthly State, and instantly elevated to the Superior Mansions, when we are called to contemplate the future State of those that *turn many to Righteousness*.

Those that were Stars both for their Light and Influence, whilst they only assisted and adorned the Church on Earth, shall not fail to emit more, and more glorious Beams, when fix'd in an higher Orb, when moving in a larger Sphere in the Firmament of Glory.

A more particular account of what is here intended, we may gather,

*First*, From the Opposition between the State here expressed, and the Blackness of Darkness for ever, in which all the Devils and Damned Souls (and especially those Ministers that wretchedly neglected the Duties of their Function) shall be eternally enveloped. Those Prisons and Chains of Darkness, into which they are cast, and in which they are fast bound until the universal Appearance at the Great Judgment Day, cannot be more Black, Confounding and Dismal, than the Robes of Light with which Faithful Ministers must Shine, will be Radiant and Dazling.

*Secondly*, From the Difference there is between the State of Ministers on Earth, and that which is here spoken of.

*First*, As the latter entirely excludes the many Infelicities and Imperfections of the former.

*Secondly*,

## *Faithful Ministers declared and improved.* 15

Secondly, As it far transcends all the Brightness and Glory it can pretend to.

1. The State signified by *the brightness of the Firmament*, &c. is a State that perfectly excludes all the Imperfections and Disadvantages which cloud the Faithful Ministers of Christ here in this World. The Heavenly Light is not only opposite to the thick Darkness of Hell, but perfectly banishes all the Shade and Gloominess of this mixed terrene State.

That which is affirmed of the Righteous in general, shall be most eminently verified in *those that turn many to Righteousness, they shall shine forth as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father*, Matt. 13. 43.

1. *They shall shine forth*; First, out of those Clouds that their Sinful Frailties have cast about them. Here they are Frail Sinful Men, encompassed with divers Infirmities, the very best of them not excepted; and this is more visible in them, by reason of their Station, and more notably obscures them, than any other sort of Men. But in the Heavenly State there shall not be the least Scar or Footstep of any such Humane Frailty.

2. *They shall shine forth*, from the Penal Consequences of these Sinful Frailties, whether more immediately affecting their Persons, or attending their Conditions and outward Circumstances. There shall be *no more Curse*, Rev. 22. 3. no more Sickness and Pain upon the Body, no more Doubt nor Discomposure of the Spirit. Here Ministers may be exercised in any kind of Affliction as well as others, and often do meet with sharp Trials in one kind or another above others. There they shall be no more obscured by the Privacy of their Stations, nor by the Meanness of their Appearance, by which many Ministers of great Worth are either in a manner quite hidden from publick Notice, or valued at a lower Rate than otherwise they would or ought to be. Calumnies and Persecutions shall blacken them no more; They shall shine forth of those Mists which are raised about them, by the Scandals committed in their Flocks, which are often construed to their great Disadvantage, though they have endeavoured never so much the preventing and healing of them. They shall likewise

wife shine forth out of those Obscurities, wherein their mutual Jealousies, their unaccountable Distances and Alienations, and their interfering one with another have involved them.

2. As this *shining like the brightness of the Firmament, &c.* excludeth the Imperfections of the present State, so it eminently includes, and every way excels all the Glory wherewith they or any other Persons do or possibly can shine in it. All the Secular Shining, the outward Grandeur that *Constantine* the Great, and all other munificent Princes, have either annexed to the Ministerial Function, or themselves enjoyed, is absolute Darknes to that Brightness wherewith the poorest Faithful Minister shall one day shine and eclipse it all for ever.

And for the Spiritual Glory with which they shine in this Life, it shall be fully perfected, and as much exceed it self, as the Flower and Fruit do the Seed and Root; or as the Abilities of Manhood do those of the Infant State; or as a perfect Master-piece doth the rude Draught and first Lineaments of the Picture.

Thus having discoursed concerning the Glory here described by way of Opposition to the Darknes and Horrour of the contrary State, and likewise in a way of Distinction from this present mortal State; I come now to treat of it as it is in it self, which we shall find to include all that is perfect and glorious.

Here we may note, first, What is the Subject of this Shining. Secondly, Wherein it consists. Thirdly, To whom the Ministers of the Gospel shall shine. Fourthly, How long it shall continue.

To the first of these, 1. The entire Person, consisting of Soul and Body, shall *shine as the brightness of the Firmament, and as the Stars for ever and ever.* Both were here Sanctified, both laboured and suffered in the Service of our Redeemer, both were the Subjects of that Right and Claim to this Glory, which was spoken of before; and therefore both shall partake of it. The Body without the Soul is not at all capable of Glory as a moral Retribution, the Soul without the Body is not capable of compleat and consummate Bliss; both together therefore must be the adequate Subject of it.

## *Faithful Ministers declared and improved. 17*

2. As to the second Enquiry wherein it consists, it must be confessed, the formal nature of this Glory is but very imperfectly understood by us: Only this much, the Metaphor of Brightness and Shining doth import,

1. Life and Vigour: Darkness is as the shadow of Death, but Light (when applied to a rational subject) ascribes an Excellency of Life to it.

2. Wisdom and Knowledge: Nothing that is Corporeal can more fully represent that which is Spiritual, than Light doth Knowledge; For that which the one is to Bodily Agents and Objects, that the other is to Agents and Objects Spiritual and Divine.

3. It is a Symbol of Purity: Those that shall shine as the Stars (according to the vulgar Acceptation) shall be Pure and Immaculate.

4. Dignity and Honour are implied in it: Darkness is a Resemblance of Debatement and Dishonour; but Light is an Emblem of Advancement and Glory.

5. It signifies Beauty and Amiability: *Truly the Light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the Eyes to behold the Sun,* Eccl. 11. 7. How pleasant then will it be, to see each of these Stars out shine the Sun in its Meridian Lustre.

6. It very properly signifies Joy and Felicity, as Darkness is used to express Sorrow and Misery, *Psal. 97. 11.* and frequently accompanies them.

If we apply these Notions to the glorified Soul and Body, we shall perceive what manner of Shining is here ascribed to them.

1. The Soul shall shine with all Intellectual Perfection: Every Faculty shall be exalted and refined to the highest pitch of which it is capable, and shall shine in the Glory and Splendour of its natural Excellency. Besides which there is yet an higher Glory wherewith the Soul shall shine, and that is Moral Purity; or the Moral Rectitude of each Faculty in it self, and of the several Faculties as they respect each other; whereby they are rightly disposed, and regularly exert themselves towards the Objects with which they converse. O what a glorious Shining will there be, when all the Gifts of Mini-

sters shall resolve themselves into one perfect Intuition, and all their Graces (such as Repentance, Faith, Hope, &c.) shall yield all their Vigour to that final Grace of Holy Love, and be wholly swallowed up in delightful Fruition!

2. The Body shall shine with an admirable Corporeal Splendour: What shall be the Brightness and Beauty of the Celestial Body, we may partly apprehend from the shining of *Moses* his Face when he had been with God, *Exod. 34. 33.* which was such, that a Vail was necessary to fit him to converse with the People, from the Glory in which our Saviour appeared upon the Mount with *Moses* and *Elias* at his Transfiguration, which was too great for the choicest and most eminent of his Disciples to bear, and could not be equalled by any Humane Skill or Artificial Glory. Somewhat we may gather from the falling of a few Rays of Heavenly Light about *Saul* when he was going to *Damascus* (which probably were Emanations from the Glorified Body of our Lord Jesus.) How did this sudden Effusion of Heavenly Light overcome both the Light of the Sun at Noon-day, and the Sight and Spirit too of Persecuting *Saul*!

3. Respectively each to other, the Soul and Body shall shine in a Sweet and Harmonious Accord: The Glory of the one is fitly Subservient to the Glory of the other: The Soul is enshrined in the Corporeal Light and Splendour of the Body, and the Body is animated all over by the Intellectual Light and Glory of the Soul: The Glory of the Soul shall shine through the Transparent Brightness of the Celestial Body: The Soul shall not abase the Body, nor that seduce the Soul any more for ever. There shall be an equal fitness in the one to command, as in the other to obey, and in both to glorify and enjoy the God of Glory. The Spiritual Union and Agreement for the Services of that Holy State, between Soul and Body, shall be more exquisite and intimate than now the Natural; and both shall be yet more Sacredly united to God, than they are or can be to each other. Both shall live, and move, and have their Beings in God, and together with Being, Life and Acting; in him they shall possess the Perfection of Glory. The Soul shines in the Celestial Body,  
the

## *Faithful Ministers declared and improved.* 19

the Body in the Celestial Society and Regions, but all in God, and God in them all, and infinitely above and beyond them: On him they all depend as the original Light; to him they are all Subordinate as the supream Light; to him they all conform, as to the grand exemplar of Purity. To God (and to the Lamb as immediately Subordinate) there is a constant Subjection and Resignation of Persons, Possessions and Powers, with a constant Reference of all Acts and Achievements to his Glory. Hence all the Beauty, Dignity and Felicity of the Heavenly State result eternally. This will be further explained in the next Head, in which (having considered the Subject of this Glory, and the formal nature of it) I come to enquire,

3. To whom they shine. Shining is a term partly relative, something is supposed to be irradiated, where there is any Exhibition of Light: And surely that which is true concerning the meanest kind and lowest degree of Light, will not be found wanting in the highest Instances of the most excellent kind of Light that the Universe affords, the Light Celestial. The following Particulars will shew what various and endless Reflections and Repercussions of Light the Heavenly Mansions are filled with.

1. They shine to God in his Holy Abode and Presence. They shine with the Approbation and Acceptance, and to the Honour of God the Father as Creator: He will have Complacency in them, as those who have Ministred on Earth, not to the Recovery only, but even to the Improvement and Advancement of lapsed Creatures, above the Felicity of that State from which they fell.

God the Son our Redeemer, will be glorified in them, as those who have received Authority from him, and acted under him on Earth, as he was a Prophet in revealing the Will of God; as a Priest in offering up Spiritual Sacrifices of Prayer and Praise, and making Intercession for the People; and as King, in governing the several parts of the Catholick Church over which they did preside.

The Holy Ghost, as the Sanctifier and Comforter of Souls, will be glorified in their Glory: Because they improved the



Gifts and Graces received from him, in illuminating and converting the Elect of God, in Quickning, Comforting, Strengthening and Edifying them to Salvation; and in vanquishing and expelling all his and their Enemies. Thus does the Light of these Stars reflect back to the Source and Center of Light and Glory.

2. They shall shine to the great Satisfaction of the Angelick Orders, and of the whole Heavenly Host. We all know how the Angels rejoyce at the Conversion of a Sinner, and how gladly they officiate in conveying Souls to their own Calm and Blissful Regions, upon their Separation from the Body. With what Applauses then will they receive the Souls of Ministers, that were not only Sanctified themselves, but successfully employed about turning others, many others, to Righteousness, so as none of the Angels ever were. What special Interviews may be between Ministers and the Souls they have converted, and whether any extraordinary Intercourse amongst these Stars themselves, I pretend not to determine. Only it seems no less probable that these Spiritual Relations, as they stood on Earth, should be recognized in Glory, than that those should which are founded in Acts purely Natural, and which were most immediately accommodated to this earthly State.

3. Those that turn many to Righteousness, shall shine to themselves. Every one of them shall be a Mirrour of Divine Glory to himself; and shall find ineffable Complacency in the Views and Surveys he takes of his own perfect Rectitude and Glory.

4. They shall shine to the Devils and Damned Spirits. With what Regret and Anguish will they behold Ministers ascend to that Glory from which they long since irrecoverably fell. How will their Malignant Rage and Envy torment them, when they shall see poor despised Ministers arrayed with everlasting Light; and that too for the Service they have done against the Prince of the Kingdom of Darkness! Yea, and how will wicked Persecutors gnash their Teeth to see those very Men triumphing in Glory, whom they insulted, and basely entreated as the Off-scouring of all things,  
and



and would not suffer to live quietly on Earth. How will all those Wretches be confounded for ever, that shall see the self-same Ministers, as Stars shining with so transcendent a Lustre, whose Counsels and Admonitions they rejected, and whose Authority, perhaps, they disputed and disdained to stoop to!

4. The fourth and last general Head concerns the Eternity of this Glory. Here the brightest Stars shine but for a very short Season, and presently Death comes with his Dismal Shade, which not only eclipses but quite extinguishes their Light. *The Prophets, do they live for ever?* Zech. 1. 5. but after they once come to shine above, as it will be without Imperfection, so it will be without Intermission, and without end. Sooner shall all the Stars in the visible Heavens be disrobed of their Light, than one of these brighter Stars shall suffer the least Diminution of its Splendour. Both the Glory it self, and the Eminency of it, shall last for ever: They shall be ever Glorious, and ever Superlatively so: Those that are once admitted into the Presence of God, and united to him as the Fountain of Glory can neither be separated from him, nor fail of Supply, whilst that Fountain of Light is ever overflowing. It is a Glory that not only exceeds the Merits, and is adequate to all the Capacities of its Possessors, but also is commensurate to their Immortal Duration, and runs parallel with the Line of Eternity.

This may suffice to be spoken concerning the Glorious Reward of Faithful Ministers in the other World: *There indeed is the principal Reward of all Vertue*, but it is not without all Reward in this present State. Pleasure and Honour the most Pure and Genuine, are truly inseparable from all virtuous Actions; but they do most visibly and sensibly attend us when we are employed in doing good to others. And the greater the Good is, the more Ravishing the Delight that accompanies it. He that does good to the Bodies of others, finds a secret Exalting upon it in his own Breast, and is ready to confess that he hath more obliged himself by becoming a Benefactor, than those to whom he was so, and that it is more Blessed to give than to receive, Acts 20. 35. It is not only the more honourable Station and Office amongst Men,

Men, but hath more of a God-like Grandeur and Felicity in it. How much greater cause have they to rejoyce who do good to the Souls of Men, by delivering them from the most Savage and Merciless Tyranny of the Devil, and their own wicked Lusts, whose Vassals they have been, and *bringing them into the glorious liberty of the Children of God.* Thus turning Souls to Righteousness is its own Reward, because it includes the doing of the greatest good to Mankind, to which all other good Works are but remotely subservient.

This may be lookt upon as an earnest and fore-tast of that surpassing Glory and Happiness which is here promised. And so I shall close the Doctrinal part of this Discourse.

It remains that we make the best Practical Improvement of which the matter is capable; which surely is very great.

1. I would humbly offer to my Reverend Fathers and Brethren in the Ministry, the clear Indications which the Text gives: 1. Of our Work: 2. Of our Reward. And thence I would infer Directions to guide us in, and Motives to quicken us to the Performance of the Duty, that we may not fall short of the Reward.

1. *We see our Work.* It is not what many Ministers aim at and busie themselves about, and what we are all apt enough to affect: 'Tis not, I mean, that we may gain Applause from the Populace or even from the Learned World; not to flourish in Riches, or in Pomp and Splendour; not to intrigue till we obtain a Dominion over our Brethren; not to Lord it over God's Heritage; not to live in ease and fullness, whatever becomes of our Work and Charge. Much less is it to please Men to their own unspeakable Prejudice, by favouring them in their evil Courses, and nourishing the Lusts that will prey upon them for ever. Such ends as these are only fit for the Ministers of Satan, and those that serve the God of this World, to seek and labour after. They are as repugnant to the Sacred Office, as they are inconsistent with Sincere Piety.

The true and proper end of the Ministry, as instituted of God, and embraced and exercised by every Serious Christian duly called and separated to it, is to *turn many to Righteousness.*

Other

## Faithful Ministers declared and improved. 23

Other Subordinate ends we may lawfully propose to our selves, but they must be no further sought, than they are truly reconcilable with the Management of our Ministerial Work in the most effectual manner. So that if it should become necessary thereto, we ought to forego all external Privileges and Emoluments; rather than renounce or frustrate it. Whatever Men account Wisdom now, there will come a time when that Scripture shall take place, *Prov. 11. 30. He that winneth Souls is wise.* He will be found to have employed his Time and Talents to the best Advantage for his own Comfort, for the Glory of God, and the common Good of the World (which is the height of Wisdom) that gaineth Souls, which otherwise had perished eternally.

All Proud, Sloathful, Sensual, Worldly Ministers, that have gained no Souls to Christ, but perhaps hardened them in their Impieties, shall one day wish, that they had chosen the meanest and basest, the most servile and laborious Calling that could be found, rather than this Holy and Honourable Office.

2. We see our Encouragement. It's an eminent Degree of eternal Glory: All our precious Light and Influence which we shed on others, during our momentary Labours upon Earth, will return to us again, and ennoble us for ever in Heaven. How Poor and Contemptible is all the Tinsel-bravery of Popes and Cardinals, of Prelates and Princes, in comparison of this excellent Glory? This shall be Verdant and Flourishing, when theirs is laid in the Dust. 'Tis a hard thing to be a good Minister; but then it is a blessed thing to shine in Glory for ever.

Let us then apply our selves to the Work of the Ministry, as those that design, above all things, to promote the Salvation of many, by *turning them to Righteousness.* We know, that without Holiness none shall see the Lord; we know that Men are begotten again, to a lively hope ordinarily by the Preaching of the Gospel; we know that if Men perish through our Neglect, their Blood will be required of us; we know also that God worketh ordinarily according to the Suitableness of the Means, and that there is much Duty incumbent

incumbent on us, to fit our Endeavours to the end we would attain by them.

First then, Let this guide us in our Studies and Preaching. He is not the best Preacher that makes the loudest Noise; nor yet he that makes the finest Flourish, and garnishes each Period with the Flowers of Rhetorick; nor he that ostentatiously abounds with needless Subtilties, and strives to shew all the Learning he has, whether the Subject require it or no. Such preach themselves really, while they profess to set forth Jesus Christ to the People: Those that would *turn many to Righteousness*, must choose to treat upon Subjects which their Auditors most needs, in a clear convincing manner, with Gravity and Seriousness: They must feel the Power of those Truths upon their own Souls, which they would impress upon others. Men of high Parts must deny themselves, if need be, for the good of others, by condescending to the meanest Capacities: They must not think it below them to use familiar and plain Expressions, where those will serve best to convey a clear Idea of the Truths of God to the Hearers. Those whose Gifts are more slender must double their Diligence, that they may not fall too much below the Dignity of the Subjects they treat, and thereby render themselves Contemptible to the more Understanding and able sort of Christians, or to the more curious part of the Auditory.

2. This should guide us in our Prayers for our People, and our Conversations with them. How earnest should we be with God for some Fruit that might *abound to our account*? How careful should we be, not to admit any Scandalous Levity into our own carriage, nor to give countenance to it in others with whom we converse. We are doubly separated from the World, as Christians, and as Ministers; and there is a general Expectation that our Carriage be doubly strict and refined, even from those Freedoms which are more allowable in Persons of a different Character. If God shall help us to demean our selves with Wisdom, Sobriety and Godliness, our Conversations will doubtless conciliate a Reverence for our Persons and Labours; besides the direct Influence

## *Faithful Ministers declared and improved.* 25

fluence they will have upon the Minds of those that are no further acquainted with us. If the design of turning many to Righteousness govern our Behaviour, it will make us Patient towards all, Free to converse with the Poorest of the Flock, and Vigilant to lay hold on all Opportunities that may facilitate the Success of our Endeavours upon them.

Surely our Encouragement is every way proportionate to the Difficulties we have to encounter. We serve a good Master, our Work is pleasant, even when it is most painful to the Flesh. We have a Promise of the gracious Presence of our Lord with us, *Matt. 28. ult.* to assist our Endeavours, to protect our Persons, and prosper our Labours, to the end of our Lives, and to the World's end. But above all, let the Consideration of our Reward invigorate us, when we begin to relax our Pains, and to intermit our Labours. Let us all fire our Hearts with a noble Ambition of shining like the Stars for ever and ever. The more any of us are barred and excluded from Secular Honours and Preferments, let us so much the more ardently aspire after the Heavenly Glory. We have (if I mistake not) some Advantage this way above others; since the less of Favour and Privilege we enjoy in this World upon the account of our Ministry, others have the less occasion to suspect the Sincerity of our Intentions, and we may with the more Assurance wait for a Glorious and Unfading Crown. *Wherefore, Holy Brethren, partakers of the Heavenly Calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our Profession Christ Jesus. Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his House, Heb. 3. 1, 2.*

Our Blessed Redeemer was not only a Pattern of all Christian Virtues, as they are common to every Station, but particularly of Ministerial Prudence, Zeal, Patience, Meekness, Fidelity, Diligence, and all under the greatest Discouragements from that Polity under which he lived, and from the Grandees of that People with whom and for whose Benefit he spent his Labours and shed his Blood. His gentle treating of those that were weak, but willing to learn their Duty; his gradual discovery of Christian Verities as they could be born; his sharp and plain rebuking of those that strutted in a

Garb of Pharisaical Sanctity, but malign'd his Person and Design, and made it their business to seduce others; his Compassion to Souls, and easiness of Access to the poorer sort, were all intended and are all recorded for our Imitation.

Let us also consider *Daniel* and all the Holy Prophets, with the Apostles and Primitive Bishops; Let us consider the many Holy Lights that adorned the Church since the Reformation, and particularly the British Churches. Let their Zeal and Constancy live in us, and be transmitted by us with all Advantages to those that shall succeed us. Let us consider the Example of our Reverend deceased Brother, whom if I reckon amongst the chiefest of those Modern Worthies that have turned many to Righteousness, and do now *shine as the brightness of the Firmament, and as the Stars for ever and ever*, I doubt not to have the Suffrages of all that hear me, and of all that knew him.

He was a Person of good natural Parts, one that had enough of a Genius to master what he applied himself to, and to make up the Figure of a great Man: These natural Abilities were cultivated by extraordinary Industry, which begun very early, and continued all his Life; witness the many Volumes which he has left behind him written with his own hand. He was most conversant in those parts of Learning which are directly Subservient to Divinity, and made great use thereof in all his Composes; but with so little Affectation, that the Unlearned were never amused with it, and yet the Judicious part of his Auditory had no lack of it. His Parts and Learning were both admirably set off by a singular Fitness for Friendship and Conversation, in which he was amiable above many. His Temper was Sincere, Candid, and Generous to and beyond his Power: His Discourse was Ingenious, Innocent, Pleasant, and Profitable to a high degree. His Deportment was Grave, yet Sweet and Obliging. These Vertues were lodged in a Soul truly Christian. I know we must make some Allowance for Humane Infirmities, from which none are exempt whilst they are in the Body. He was but a Candidate for the State of Perfection, and was a  
*Man.*

## Faithful Ministers declared and improved. 27

*Man subject to like Passions as we are, which he hath now put off, together with Mortality.*

But certainly this notwithstanding, He had a truly Christian Spirit, and did abound in choice Experiences of God's Dealings with himself and others. His Life was filled up with a Uniform Series of Faithful Services to God and to his Generation. He did not load Men with heavy Burdens, which he would not touch with one of his Fingers; but put his own Neck into the same Christian Yoke, which he exhorted others to take upon them.

Besides his Exemplary Behaviour as a Christian in general, designing and doing all the Good he was capable of to the Souls and Bodies of Men, he was highly imitable in his Domestick Relations. He was (and will ever be acknowledged to have been) a most kind and tender Husband to his Yoke-fellow, a loving and faithful Father to his Children, a gentle and just Master to his Servants, and most precisely Regular in the Religious Conduct of his Family.

But the greatest and best part of his Character (his Christianity supposed) is this, That he was an *Able and Faithful Minister of the New Testament, not of the Letter but of the Spirit*. He reflected Honour to the Sacred Function, as well as received Honour from it. He was Faithful to his Ministerial Vow, and did not Sacrilegiously alienate himself from the Work to which he was solemnly devoted. When the Law deprived him of the Temple, and publick Maintenance to which he stood related, he quietly gave place. But he judged not that this did or could either discharge him from his Ministerial Vow, or dissolve the Relation betwixt him and his People.

Accordingly, with all Meekness and Simplicity, and without any Spirit of Opposition, he proceeded in his Work amongst that People to which he had so clear and universal a Call; paying all Deference to the Civil Magistrate, so far as he could, without violating his Conscience. In this way of Sober Conscientious Non-conformity to the English Diocefan Prelacy, Subscriptions and Ceremonies, he cast himself and his Family purely upon Providence, and lived



upon it all his days. Nor was the Divine Providence wanting to raise him up many kind Benefactors, whose Liberality supplied the Want of a Legal Maintenance. These were his Sentiments, and this his Practice. But he was, nevertheless, a Person of singular Moderation: He had both a large Charity and great Veneration for those that differed from him, if they were Men of Worth, and Unblameable in their Lives. They can testify this, that know what a fair and amicable Correspondence he maintained with many of his Reverend Conforming Brethren, to several of whom this Good Man's Name was perhaps as Precious, and his Society as grateful, as if he had been one of their own Stamp. But his Moderation towards those that dissented from him, was not more Eminent, than his Condescension to the Juniors in the Ministry, and to those that were, upon many accounts, much Inferior to him. He took great Pleasure in Conversing with Hopeful Young Ministers, and never failed to give them all the Respect and Encouragement that was either due to them, or convenient for them. He was very Free and Familiar with those of his more intimate Acquaintance, and upon all Occasions would express both a Paternal Care of them, and Affection to them. How may I and some others cry out upon this occasion, as *Elisha* did when he saw the Translation of *Elijah*, *My Father, my Father, the Character of Israel, and the Horse-men thereof*, 2 Kings 2. 12.

Our Reverend and Dear Father is taken from us, whose Authority we revered, and whose Indulgent Care over us was one of our greatest Supports. Nor was he only an excellent Minister at large, but a Prudent Vigilant Pastor to a numerous Flock that dearly loved him, and was no less dearly beloved of him. How Solicitous was he for the Peace and Holiness of his People? How was his Soul grieved, and what an Holy Solitude seized him, when any Scandalous Sin was committed amongst them; and how Tenderly and Faithfully, and (through the Divine Goodness) how successfully did he treat with Offenders, *to recover them*, by Repentance, *out of the Snare of the Devil*? Yet though he was a Person of such Wisdom and Sufficiency, as we all knew him

to



to be, yet none could be more Diffident of himself, or more disposed to ask the Advice of others. He rarely came to a Resolution about any momentous Affair, till he had first consulted with his Brethren in the Ministry, or the more Intelligent part of his own Congregation. By this means, and the good Service he did amongst them, he had so great an Interest in his Peoples Affections, that they scarce knew how to refuse any thing that he thought fit to urge them to. The ample Contributions of his Hearers, at his Motion, to all the great occasions of Charity that have been of late propounded, are publick and undeniable Evidences of this Truth.

But his particular Excellency is yet behind. He was one of the most Powerful Profitable Preachers that ever these Parts were acquainted with: In other things he exceeded most others, but in this he exceeded himself. There be many Excellencies belonging to a Preacher, each of which singly might be sufficient to render a Person Useful and Eminent, that were all combined in him. His Matter was solid and weighty, and of a Practical Tendency to change Mens Natures and Reform their Lives. He was not for novel undigested Speculations. He studiously declined Controversie at all times, but especially in the Pulpit. Nor did he make it his business to reflect upon the different Parties amongst Protestants: Instead of that, he endeavoured, with all his Strength, to declare Divine Truths with so convincing an Evidence, and to enforce his Exhortations with such irresistible Arguments, and with such poignant Expressions, as might leave the Hearers under strong Convictions concerning the Necessity of Holiness. And O how had God fitted him for this great Work, and how did the Lord own him in the Prosecution of it? How would he lay open the Deceits of Mens Hearts? How would he expose the Devices whereby Satan commonly deludes and destroys Sinners? He often penetrated so far into the secret Recesses of the Soul, and described the Conception, Birth and Progress of Sin in such lively Colours, that

that one would have thought he had not only been present at the outward Commission of it, but that he had lain in Mens Bosoms, and inspected all the most secret Transactions there. And yet I know not whether he was more Happy in this, or in opening to Penitents a Door of Hope, when they were once thoroughly awakened, and pouring the Oyl of Consolation into their Bleeding Wounds. *He was a Messenger, an Interpreter, one among a thousand, to shew unto Man his Uprightness, Job 33. 23.* His Sermons were plain and discursive, and full of Holy Zeal and Fervour; but withal so embellished with notable Maxims and curious Observations, so illustrated with pat Similitudes and Examples, and delivered with such a Propriety, Facility, and Fluency of Expression, and with so graceful a Mean and Gesture, as rendered the plainest Matter no less acceptable than it was necessary. Nor did he only entertain his Hearers with that which was good in it self, but with what was seasonable and proper. He was very Inquisitive and Observant about the State of his Country, and the Providences of God towards it, and about the Condition and Carriage of his Flock; to both which he did accommodate his Discourses with singular Judgment and Dexterity. In this he was most Impartial, and would inveigh with equal Freedom against the Faults of the Rich as of the Poor. Nor was he only an excellent popular Preacher; he was also an able Expositor of Holy Scripture. The Solutions he produceth to the Difficulties of the Text, were clear and Satisfactory; the Expositions sound and weighty; the Observations fine, and, many times, such as do not ordinarily occur; and the whole performed with an Ease and Elegancy peculiar to himself. What Method soever he followed, he spake with Authority and Majesty; *His words were as goads and as nails fastned by the masters of Assemblies, which are given from one Shepherd, Eccl. 12. 11.*

I am well assured under his Ministry, if ever in these latter days, that saying of the Apostle received a blessed Accom-

## Faithful Ministers declared and improved. 31

Accomplishment in many Instances (allowing for the Disparity between the Gifts bestowed in such distant Ages of the Church) *But if all Propheſie, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all. And thus are the Secrets of his Heart made manifeſt; and ſo falling down on his face, he will worſhip God, and report that God is in you of a truth,* 1 Cor. 14. 24. Many that have come to hear him accidentally, or out of Curioſity, have both experienced and declared much of this nature.

It pleaſed God to honour his Miniſtry with ſuch abundant Succeſs, that great numbers, where-ever he reſided, were at leaſt viſibly reclaimed by it; and many of thoſe (we have great reaſon to judge) really changed into the Divine Image; concerning whom he might ſay with the Apoſtle, *Though ye have ten thouſand Inſtructors in Chriſt, yet have ye not many Fathers; for in Chriſt Jeſus I have begotten you through the Goſpel,* 1 Cor. 4. 15. For the Truth of all this I appeal to you all, and to all that knew him, or almoſt ever heard of him. I appeal to that univerſal Eſteem and Reverence that was paid him by Perſons of all Ranks high and low; of all ſorts, good and bad; of all Opinions, Conformiſts and Nonconformiſts.

I do not preſent you with this account of this Eminent and Faithful Servant of Chriſt, as if it were a full and perfect Character of him, No, that would require a larger compaſs, and an abler manage than I can give it. This may ſuffice to be ſpoken at the preſent, to the honour of Divine Grace, manifeſting it ſelf in ſo uſeful an Inſtrument. May it alſo provoke us to bleſs God for him, and kindle in us an Emulation of his Attainments, and of the Succeſs that attended his Labours.

2. The ſecond Inference concerns the ſurviving Relations. A juſt Senſe all ought to have of this great Loſs, and therefore it may well be indulged to you that are the greateſt

greatest Sufferers by it. But let us not mourn as those that have no Hope, but rather as Persons assured, that his Soul, whose removal we lament, does already shine as a Star of the first Magnitude, and enjoys the Blessed Reward of all his Labours.

The Stroke indeed is heavy, the Breach is wide, and never to be forgotten, never (I fear) to be repaired upon every account. But seeing our Loss is his Gain, why should not his Gain be our Comfort? He is exalted to an higher Orb, and moves in a more glorious Sphere than ever. And if God receive Glory from him in a more excellent way, and he also be dignified and made Happy after a more excellent manner than was possible on Earth, Why should you or any of us Repine? It was a removal that must be at one time or another, and God hath determined this to be the fittest Season; Do you therefore acquiesce in what he hath done, and study to improve this Providence to a greater Fitness for your own Change. Though his presence be withdrawn, his Example, his Instructions, and his Prayers, I hope, will be always beneficial to you, and in some measure supply the want of it. The same God that made his presence useful, can make his absence so, and he it is that must do all.

3. The third Inference respects the People from whom he was taken: And they are of two sorts; First, Such as have not turned to Righteousness, notwithstanding all the earnest Calls and Invitations which this Ambassador of Christ hath given them. They have been *like the deaf Adder that stoppeth her ear; which will not hearken to the Voice of the Charmer, charm he never so wisely.*

I must needs say, you have lost one of the most promising Seasons that ever any enjoyed, for the Conversion of your Souls. You shall hear the Voice of this powerful Orator no more for ever: He must solicit, warn, exhort you no more. O recollect the moving Language, the Holy  
mellifluous

## Faithful Ministers declared and improved. 33

mellifluous Oratory wherewith he would have conquered your obstinate Hearts, that he might espouse you to one Husband, Jesus Christ. How did he pursue you from time to time, longing to see Jesus Christ formed in you. Are you not ashamed and terribly afraid what will become of you, when you consider how many he prevailed upon, and yet you remain in your Sins? O that the remembrance of these things might so revive upon you, that being dead, he may yet speak to the awakening and saving of your Souls? Nay, How Happy would it be yet for you, and what an Alleviation to your present Grief, if the Sense of God's Displeasure, in taking away this great Light from us, might cloath his Funerals with the Virtue of an Ordinance, so as to effect that Blessed Change upon you, which was in vain attempted by all other means? Know you not that you must give a strict account of all the Sermons you have heard, and of all the Convictions you have had under his Ministry?

Hear, all you that are Drunkards, Fornicators, Unrighteous, Sabbath-breakers; all that are Covetous, all that indulge their Furious Passions, or that live in any other Notorious Sin; and know, that you, *even you*, must turn unto Righteousness, or perish everlastingly. O dare not, then, to meet this Servant of Christ at the great Judgment-day, in an unconverted State; for, if you do, he will be a swift and terrible Witness against you. How will he be ready to say, Lord, these are the Wretches, that I so often, so long, and so earnestly treated with, about the Salvation of their precious Souls, and all in vain. I required them in thy Name, and in obedience to thy Authority, to repent and turn; I besought them; I conjured them by the Mercies of God, by the Meritorious Bloodshed of Jesus Christ, by the invaluable Worth of their own Immortal Souls; I opened the Gospel-Covenant to them; I shewed them the terms of Life; I set the Promises and Threatnings, Life and Death, Heaven and Hell before them; I directed them to seek the Aids of thy Holy Spirit; I told

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them

them of this very day, when they and I should meet at this thy Tribunal, to receive an irreversible Sentence, but they believed not my Report. I travelled over them, I spent my Labours and Life upon them, to have broken their Adamantine Hearts; *I sought to find out acceptable words, even words of Truth*; I endeavoured to shew them their Misery, and to discover the Remedy provided in the Gospel. But all that I could obtain was a verbal Commendation. *Lo I was unto them as a very lovely Song, of one that hath a pleasant Voice, and can play well on an Instrument, for they heard my words, but they did them not.* Sinners, *when this cometh to pass, (lo, it will come) shall you not then know, to your Cost, that a Prophet hath been amongst you? Ezek. 33. 32, 33.* *What will ye do in the day of Visitation, and in the Desolation which shall come from far, to whom will ye flee for help? and where will you leave your Glory? Isa. 10. 3.*

The other part of the People from which he is taken, consists of those that have *turned to Righteousness*. Many such went before him to possess that Glory which was revealed to them, and for which they were prepared by this Blessed Instrument. These have already experienced the Truth of what he told them, and are Partners with him in the Sacred Pleasures of Paradise. My business, therefore, is with those that are left behind in this Vale of Tears: And of such I say, Blessed are ye of the Lord. You have cause to praise God, that ever you saw his Face, or heard his Voice, and shall praise the Free and Rich Grace of God to all Eternity. You sustain a mighty Loss, in that you must not be brought up under his Wing, whose Labours first began in you the Seed and Principle of the Divine Life. I know you will be more sensibly affected with this Loss than others, because of the Love you bare to him as to a Spiritual Father, and that you will (as you have just cause) honour his Memory whilst you have a day to live.

But this is not enough for Persons in your Circumstances: Your Dear Pastor is ravished from you, Death  
hath

## *Faithful Ministers declared and improved. 35*

hath silenced him, and bereaved you. But should not you and I then search our Hearts, and be humbled for those Sins which have provoked God to make this sore breach upon us and the whole Church, after several others, each of which was very deplorable; but all together much more are and ought to be for a Lamentation.

Have we not cause to apprehend some Judgment approaching, and that these Dear Servants of God are taken away from the evil to come? O labour after Perseverance in the Profession of the Truth, and to make good Proficiency in the ways of Godliness. So shall you see the Face of your Pastor again to your mutual Joy, and shall be a Crown to him in the day of Christ, when he shall stand forth and say, *Behold I, and the Children which the Lord hath given me.* Encourage and strengthen each other; your being deprived of so considerable an Help, should put you upon the more diligent Improvement of those Advantages which remain: Your Concord and Harmony, your Holy and Unblamable Deportment, your humble Supplications to Almighty God for the Aids of his Holy Spirit to your selves, and for a double Portion thereof upon those that succeed in the room of this once gracious and now glorified Saint and Minister, may be a propitious Token to us, that our God will not utterly forsake us; that he hath Mercy in store for us, and will give us a Nail in his Holy Place.

I shall remit you for a concluding Passage to Heb. 13. 7, 8, 9. *Remember them which have the Rule over you, who have spoken unto you the Word of God, whose Faith follow considering the end of their Conversation. Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to day, and for ever. Be not carried about with divers and strange Doctrines, for it is a good thing that the Heart be established with Grace, not with Meats, which have not profited them which have been occupied therein. Verse 17. Obey them that have the Rule over you, and submit your selves, for they watch for your Souls, as they that must give account, that they may*



may do it with Joy, and not with Grief; for that is unprofitable for you. Verse 20, 21. Now the God of Peace, which brought again from the Dead, our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the Sheep, through the Blood of the everlasting Covenant, make you perfect in every good Work, to do his Will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be Glory for ever and ever. Amen.

# F I N I S.

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